

Remarks

Reconsideration of allowed and pending Claims 1-7, 11-27, 30-62, 78-87, 89-110, 114-122, 124, 126-140 and 145-157 is respectfully requested.

Claims 43 and 46 have been amended to change the term "nitridized oxynitride layer" to the "nitrided oxynitride layer." The amendment merely corrects the terms in the claims for proper antecedent basis.

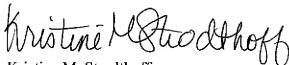
Claim 154 has been amended to delete the phrase "a presence of" (as modified in the Examiner's Amendment), and recite that the step of saturating comprises subjecting the dielectric layer to an oxygen anneal *in an oxidizing gas*.

No new matter has been added with the amendments, which are intended to merely clarify language used in the claims. The scope of the claims is intended to be the same after the amendment as it was before the amendment.

Extension of Term. The proceedings herein are for a patent application and the provisions of 37 CFR § 1.136 apply. Applicant believes that no extension of term is required. However, this conditional petition is being made to provide for the possibility that Applicant has inadvertently overlooked the need for a petition for extension of time. If any extension and/or fee are required, please charge Account No. 23-2053.

Entry of the amendments to the claims is respectfully requested. The Examiner is urged to telephone the undersigned attorney if any questions should arise.

Respectfully submitted,


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